

The Library Assistant:

The Official Journal of the Library Assistants' Association.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The last Monthly Meeting of the present Session will be held jointly with the Library Association at **The Library, Gray's Inn, W.C.**, on **Wednesday, 7th June**, when the following programme will be carried out :—

- 6.30-7. Inspection of the Inn, including the whole of the Chapel and the Library.
- 7-7.30. Refreshments.
- 7.30. Joint meeting at which a paper descriptive of the Library will be read by Mr. ARNOLD G. BURT, Acting Librarian.

Although, in consequence of their having been stored for safety, it will not be possible to see the famous Baconian Collection and other valuable books possessed by the Inn, Members may rest assured that there will be much of very great interest to be seen, the historical associations of Gray's Inn being unsurpassed.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The Twenty-first Annual Business Meeting will be held, through the kindness of Mr. C. W. F. Goss, at the **Bishopsgate Institute, E.C.**, on **Wednesday, 14th June, at 7.30 p.m.**

There having been no ballot for the Council the following members will be declared elected :—

OFFICERS AND COUNCIL, 1916-1917.

President : JAMES ROSS, Walton and Fazakerley Library, Liverpool.
Vice-President : EVAN G. REES, Westminster Public Libraries.
Honorary Treasurer : W. GEO. CHAMBERS, Woolwich Public Libraries.
Honorary Secretary : WM. BENSON THORNE, Poplar Public Libraries.

COUNCIL.

LONDON MEMBERS.

BOLTON, G. R. (Stoke Newington)
 BULLEN, R. F. (Poplar)
 COOPER, R. (Battersea)
 DARLING, Miss E. M. (Chelsea)
 DAV, Miss M. E. (Islington)
 DUMENIL, Miss R. L. (Hackney)
 HAWKINS, W. G. (Fulham).
 HOGG, J. F. (Battersea)
 SMITH, H. (Bishopsgate Institute)
 YOUNG, J. D. (Greenwich)

NON-LONDON MEMBERS.

CHECKETTS, H. W. (Birmingham)
 MORGAN, W. (Cardiff)
 OWEN, W. E. (Leamington)
 PEPPER, F. W. C. (Birmingham)
 SHARP, H. A. (Croydon)
 STROTHER, G. W. (Leeds)
 SURETIES, H. G. (Hornsey)
 TRELIVING, N. (Leeds)
 WALKER, J. E. (Tottenham)
 WARNER, J. (Croydon)

REPRESENTATIVES OF BRANCHES.

Central Irish : THOMAS H. EVANS, National Library of Ireland, Dublin.
Midland : HARRY GRINDLE, Central Library, Birmingham.
North Eastern : I. BRIGGS, Central Library, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
North Western : ERIC A. PEPIETTE, Liverpool University Library.
South Coast : ARTHUR WEBB, Public Library, Brighton.
South Wales : F. C. BULLOCK, Central Library, Cardiff.
West of Scotland : J. NORRIE, Stirling's Library, Glasgow.
Yorkshire : ROBT. W. PARSONS, Central Library, Bradford.

The TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL REPORT as printed in this issue of the Journal will be adopted, and it is hoped that there may be some discussion regarding the present circumstances of Librarianship and the Association's connection therewith.

SOUTH COAST BRANCH.

ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE.

Nominations for Officers and Committee for the ensuing year should be sent to the Acting Honorary Secretary not later than June 10th.

ETHEL GERARD,
 Acting Honorary Secretary,
 Public Library,
 Worthing.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The Fourth Annual Meeting of the South Coast Branch will be held at the **Worthing Public Library**, on **Thursday, July 6th**.

By kind invitation of Miss Marian Frost, Librarian, tea will be served at Mitchell's Restaurant at 4.30 p.m.

The Annual open Business Meeting will take place at the Library at 6.30 p.m. The chair will be taken by Councillor W. Aston (Chairman of the Worthing Public Library Committee).

The special feature of this meeting will be that instead of the usual papers, letters will be read from past and present members of the Branch who are now on active service. These letters will afterwards be filed in the "Cuttings Book" of the Branch, and will thus form a permanent record of experiences of some of our members in the Great War.

ETHEL GERARD,

Acting Honorary Secretary.

EDITORIAL.

A Generous Gift.—We think it may safely be said that the L.A.A. has no greater or more generous friend than Mr. J. Y. W. MacAlister, of the Royal Society of Medicine, and President of the L.A. A perusal of the following letter will show at a glance how keenly interested Mr. MacAlister is in the Association's welfare. His interest has always taken a most practical form, as witness the generous prizes offered by him in connection with the Easter Schools. On the present occasion, Mr. MacAlister's letter included a cheque for Five Pounds. We feel certain that in thanking him for this handsome token of his interest and generosity, we shall only be voicing the wishes of the Association at large.

1, WIMPOLE STREET,
LONDON, W.,
19th April, 1916.

DEAR MR. THORNE,

I have just heard that your Association is suffering as the result of the War, and I should like to be allowed to offer the enclosed modest contribution to your funds.

It would, in my opinion, be a disaster for the younger generation if your Association had to shut down, even temporarily.

I always remember, I confess with some pride, that when its founders were good enough to consult me about their proposal, I strongly advised them to go ahead, and felt assured that the establishment of such a Society could not fail to be of great value to the younger members of the craft.

With kind regards,

Yours very truly,

J. Y. W. MAC ALISTER.

The Twenty-First Annual Meeting.—One has tried to imagine what the twenty-first annual meeting would have been like if the Great War had not come. Doubtless an exceedingly interesting programme would have been arranged to mark this epoch in our history. As things are, however, the meeting must necessarily be shorn of a great deal of its ceremony. Nevertheless, there is no reason why the present annual meeting should not be an interesting function, if only all members and friends of the Association who remain care to make it so. May we earnestly appeal to all chief librarians to afford their staffs every facility to attend this coming-of-age meeting, and to every assistant to do his or her utmost to attend.

The New President.—We have very great pleasure in welcoming to the Presidency Mr. James Ross, of the Walton and Fazakerley Library, Liverpool. Mr. Ross is a most enthusiastic librarian, and has the interests of assistants thoroughly at heart. He has done excellent work for the Association, notably in connexion with the formation of the North Western Branch, of which he is the Honorary Secretary. Mr. Ross also gave valuable assistance in connexion with the North Eastern Branch when he was at Sunderland, and also to the Yorkshire Branch, founded while he was at York. We are confident that we shall not look to him in vain for a maintenance of the high standard of professional ability and wisdom which has been associated with all past Presidents of the Association. We sincerely wish him a very successful year of office.

Exemption for Librarians.—Further to our note last month, we are now able to announce that the Chief Librarian of Gateshead has been granted exemption from military service. The Sub-Librarian of Yarmouth, the only trained assistant left, has also been granted exemption. In connection with the latter case, we quote the following for our readers' information, from a Norfolk paper:—"The working of the Indicator required special knowledge, and he had to answer 30 to 40 applications per week for information, and special books wanted by officers and soldiers."

HENRY THOMAS COUTTS.

It is with deep regret that we have to record the death of Mr. Henry Thomas Coutts, F.L.A., late of the Islington Public Libraries, which took place on 22nd April, 1916, at Croydon. Mr. Coutts, who was in his 36th year, joined the staff of the Croydon Public Libraries in 1895 and rose to the position of Librarian-in-Charge of the Lending Department. In January, 1906, he left Croydon on being appointed Branch Librarian at Islington. He was in charge of Islington's first Library, which was opened to the public in September, 1906, and he held the position until December, 1915, when ill-health forced him to resign. He worked well and hard for Islington and in addition to his ordinary duties found time to take a keen interest in the work of the Islington Libraries' Club, and tried to further the interests and work of the Library Assistants' Association. He joined the Association in 1900, became a Member of the Council in 1904, was Honorary Secretary from 1909 to 1912, and during his tenure of office as Honorary Secretary, the material was collected and published for the "Report on Hours, Salaries, etc., of Assistants in Municipal Libraries." During the years 1912

and 1913 Mr. Coutts was President of the Association, a position which he filled with much success. He was made Honorary Fellow of the Association in 1915 and spoke to the present writer of the pleasure he felt in thus being honoured by the L.A.A. Mr. Coutts was made a Member of the Library Association in 1906, and was a Member of its Book Production Committee. He was joint-author with G. A. Stephen of a "Manual of Library Bookbinding, Practical and Historical," 1911, and wrote chapters for "Open Access Libraries, their Planning, Equipment and Organisation." Mr. Coutts also published a book of general appeal, entitled "Library Jokes and Jottings," 1914. His first article in *The Library Assistant* appeared in 1904, entitled "Are Newsrooms Desirable? a Resumé of an Evercirculator." He was also a writer of verse.

Mr. Coutts was a man of good mental capacity, had a natural aptitude for library work and was well informed on all matters relating to libraries. He was always genial, considerate and kindly to all who came into contact with him, and he tried by his conduct to honour his chosen calling. With his colleagues he was always on the very best terms and he will be much missed in Islington. Stevenson says, "Gentleness and cheerfulness, these are the perfect virtues," and Mr. Coutts had these qualities in a marked degree. The funeral was at Croydon, and representatives attended from the Croydon and Islington Libraries, the Library Assistants' Association was represented by the President (Mr. Evan G. Rees) and Mr. H. A. Sharp, Hon. Editor of *The Library Assistant*. Besides a large circle of friends, Mr. Coutts leaves a widow to mourn his loss, to whom much sympathy is extended.

W.M.

PROCEEDINGS.

MAY GENERAL MEETING.

The May Joint Meeting with the L.A. was held at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Wednesday, 17th May, at 7.30 p.m. There was an attendance of about twenty-five members and friends of the two Associations, and the chair was occupied by Mr. H. R. Tedder, Honorary Treasurer of the L.A. In the absence of Miss M. Gilbert, Borough Librarian of Newark-on-Trent, her paper entitled "The Juvenile Department: a Review," was read by Mr. W. Benson Thorne. The paper, which we hope to print in our next issue, dealt with the results achieved by the children's library rather than with broad questions of methodology and administration.

In opening the discussion, the Chairman reminded us that some years ago he suggested that bibliography should be taught in the schools. He thought that on the whole the blame for the lack of greater co-ordination between the school and the public library was not to be placed upon librarians, but upon teachers, who had a notion that as libraries did not entirely consist of school books, they did not consist of the best books. Miss Duménil (Hackney) was of opinion that the results achieved did not

merit the work put in, and that the whole thing turned upon the question of providing an efficient staff for this department. Miss Fairweather (Carlton Studio) remarked on the literary value of cinemas, comparing certain films to the "abridged editions" of classic works spoken of in the paper. People seeing such works filmed had not progressed in education the same as if they had read the books themselves. Mr. Sayers (Croydon) thought that so far not much had eventuated that was not present in our minds before. A little too much had been made of the idea of improving the children in lines of general knowledge; one of the greatest objects of the Children's Library should be the cultivation of dramatic joy; the reading of fiction by children was in itself a capital thing. With regard to lectures for children these were well worth doing upon the miscellaneous line, and could only be an inducement to go further. Mr. Preece (Stoke Newington), with some 25 years' experience of work with children said that the one great obstacle to the work was the limitation of funds. He had tried three experiments in conjunction with the schools: 1, The lending of about 50 volumes to a particular teacher for the use of a particular class. 2, A somewhat larger scheme under which a particular teacher has a book hour every week. The children in his class each bring a book to school, and they are allowed to ask questions or to seek advice on books to read, and the books borrowed are generally discussed. As a result of this one teacher's efforts two to three hundred children have been led to borrow. 3, Lectures have been organized for 10 or 12 years on odd subjects, and these were found more useful than single course lectures. Miss Austen (National Lending Library for the Blind) said that in order to encourage reading among blind children she had once hit upon the plan of asking them to write an essay on the book read, offering a small prize for the best essay. The result had been a great increase in the reading, not because of the prize offered, but owing to the incentive provided by the essay. It had also occurred to her that it might be possible to form a debating society for the children. Mrs. W. J. Harris thought that children should want no incentive to read; they should not read for any ultimate purpose. Before children's libraries could be a success, the teaching world would have to be awakened. Mr. Harris (Islington) was glad that Miss Gilbert had said nothing about children's reading rooms, because, unless they were efficiently policed, and unless the room was supplied with an intelligent assistant, reading rooms were failures. He ventured to say that there were very few library assistants in England capable of taking charge of a juvenile reading room. Mr. Chambers (Plumstead) said that it was quite unreasonable to talk about what the teachers did or what they did not do. Mr. Preece had struck the key-note of the whole thing in his remarks. At times he had had reason to regret that the school teachers had taken so much interest in his library. He knew of a certain literature class, where, when a particular author was being studied, the children were told to go round to the library after school and to ask for a book on that author, with the result that perhaps requests would come for 40 books on Wordsworth. No library, he thought, was prepared to cater for that kind of thing, and the salvation of the juvenile library lay in the fact that comparatively few children used it. Indeed, he was of opinion that the only thing we could hope to do satisfactorily was simply to allow the cream of the juvenile population to filter round to the library. Mr. Chambers also referred to the matter of financial limitations. Mr. Thorne (Poplar) would give Miss Gilbert credit for a considerable amount of enthusiasm. Several important points had not yet been dealt with in the course of the discussion: for instance, was it desirable that classics should be "abridged" for the use of children. A head mistress with whom he was acquainted thought that it would be profitable if the children could be told the story of the great books at the library, and then

taught how to use the books afterwards. The Chairman moved a vote of thanks to Miss Gilbert for her paper, and subsequently declared Miss Fairweather and Mr. F. E. Bolt duly elected to audit the Association's accounts for the financial year just closed.

OUR LIBRARY.

ATHENAEUM SUBJECT INDEX TO PERIODICALS: Issued at the Request of the Library Association. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. x 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. 1915-16.

The undermentioned Class Lists have been issued prefatory to the Index for 1915, which will contain over 10,000 entries selected from some 400 English, American, and Continental periodicals.

- Theology and Philosophy. 34 pp. 1s. 6d. n.
- European War. 48 pp. 1s. 6d. n.
- History, Geography, Anthropology and Folk-Lore. 32 pp. 1s. 6d. n.
- Sports and Games. 8 pp. 6d. n.
- Economic and Political Sciences. Law. 28 pp. 1s. n.
- Education. 16 pp. 1s. n.
- Fine Arts and Archaeology. 18 pp. 1s. n.
- Music. 12 pp. 6d. n.
- Language and Literature. 34 pp. 1s. 6d. n.
- Science and Technology. 80 pp. 2s. 6d. n.
- Preventive Medicine and Hygiene. 16 pp. 6d. n.

Each list is arranged in an alphabet of subjects with all necessary cross-references, a brief name index, list of periodicals indexed, and, where necessary, brief descriptive notes. Ultimately, the whole will be thrown into a single alphabet, which, with additional matter will constitute the Index for 1915. By means of a loan library which has been formed, any article indexed may be borrowed on payment of four pence.

It is unfortunate that this important work should have been launched in such adverse circumstances, but we venture to think that the curtailment of book funds provides a very sound reason why it should be supported by every library in the country, for, by its means, much otherwise wasted material is made available, and the efficiency of the library considerably increased. For 50s. a subscriber is entitled to all the Class Lists and Indexes issued from November, 1915—June, 1916; a discount of 50 per cent. is allowed on additional copies. While it is quite conceivable that some libraries cannot afford this sum, we think that half a guinea expended on a set of Class Lists will be an excellent investment.

It will be a thousand pities if the Index is dropped either for want of financial support or through lack of voluntary workers. We cannot close this notice without recording our indebtedness to Mr. Wyndham Hulme for his unceasing labours in connexion with its publication. Thanks are also due to the proprietors of "The Athenaeum," without whose assistance the work would probably not have been possible.

H.A.S.

CITY OF NORWICH PUBLIC LIBRARY. Annual Report of the P.L. Committee for the year ended 31st March, 1916. 23 pp.

We congratulate Mr. G. A. Stephen, City Librarian of Norwich, upon having produced a splendid example of what a library report should be. It

provides in readable form all that one wishes to know concerning the library's work for the year. From it we cull the following information :— Stock : Lending, 18,506 vols. Issues : Lending, 105,628 vols., Reference, 10,008. Tickets in force, 7,614. Income : £1,842 15s. 10d. The library has done excellent work in providing the citizens of Norwich with a selection of the best material on the origins, history, and other aspects of the war, and in giving reading facilities for the large number of troops stationed in the city. It is interesting to note that the issues of books on philosophy and religion have increased from 670 last year to 1,509, and that since 1911 the fiction percentage has decreased from 83.76 to 69.61, including juvenile fiction. The library possesses a fine collection of material relating to Norfolk and Norwich, comprising 6,300 volumes, 7,950 pamphlets, and 7,000 prints and maps; the collection of the recently founded Norfolk and Norwich Photographic Survey, to the number of 1,847 photographic prints is also housed at the library. Although not strictly within the period under review we note that the library committee was fortunate enough to secure the services of Sir Sidney Lee in connection with its Shakespeare Tercentenary celebration.

H.A.S.

CHANGES AND APPOINTMENTS.

***YOUNG**, Miss E., has been appointed Senior Assistant, Public Library, Brighton.

L.A.A. ROLL OF HONOUR.

Battersea : *R. COOPER (Dorset Yeomanry).

Portsmouth : *G. V. R. HAYWARD, (16th Hants. Regiment).

*Member, L.A.A.

A NOTE ON THE CLOSING OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

At a meeting of the Holborn Borough Council on April 12th, the Library Committee recommended "*That, for the period of the War, or until further order, the Holborn Public Library be closed to the public.*" The matter was referred to the Law and Parliamentary Committee, which submitted the following report, which we take the liberty of reprinting at some length on account of its sound reasoning and general importance :— "We understand that the Library Committee are making the proposal that the High Holborn Library should be closed. Whatever may be the merits of the case, and on this we offer no opinion, we think it right to advise the Council that the step suggested is *ultra vires*. It must be remembered that the adoption of the Library Acts . . . was not carried out by a mere resolution of the Council, who, under the London Government Act, 1899, were the successors of the Library Commissioners. The procedure laid down provides for a poll of the voters. . . . who are to be consulted on the question, and in the event of their being in favour of the adoption of the Acts there is apparently no power in the Council to refuse to carry out the voters' wishes. Moreover, when the Acts are adopted, certain powers of the Library Authority can only be exercised with the consent of the voters. . . . Although it is possible that an alternative

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LIBRARY ASSOCIATION.

TEMPORARY VACANCIES AND APPOINTMENTS.

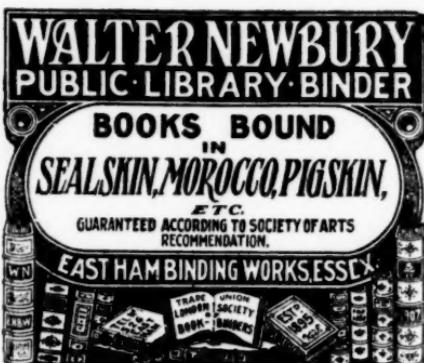
As enquiries are frequently addressed to officers of the Library Association by societies and public authorities requiring qualified persons to fill temporary vacancies, the Council have instructed the Hon. Secretary of the Education Committee to tabulate and keep on record for future use the names of persons suitable for such appointments.

Any person desiring to enter his or her name in this list should send full name, address, age, experience, number of certificates held, and any other useful particulars, to the undersigned.

As all the names that appear suitable will be submitted to any person or body enquiring, without selection, it is important that as soon as applicants are no longer available their names should be withdrawn.

ERNEST A. BAKER, M.A., D.LITT.,
Honorary Secretary of the Education Committee,
Caxton Hall, Westminster, London, S.W.

East Ham Bookbinding Works,



Plashet Lane and Elizabeth Road, East Ham, Essex.

LIBRARY ASSISTANTS' ASSOCIATION SERIES.

No. 1. The Grammar of Classification. By W. C. BERWICK SAVERS, F.L.A., Chief Librarian of the Croydon Public Libraries. **Price six-pence.**

No. 2. Libraries in Rural Districts. By HARRY FARR, Chief Librarian of the Cardiff Public Libraries. **Price three-pence.**

No. 3. The Development of Notation in Classification. By H. RUTHERFORD PURNELL, Librarian of the Public Library of South Australia. Formerly Honorary Editor of "The Library Assistant." **Price three-pence.**

No. 4. L.A.A. Report on the Hours, Salaries, Training, and Conditions of Service of Assistants in British Municipal Libraries. **Price six-pence.**

No. 5. Ideals: Old and New. An Address to Young Librarians. By E. WYNDHAM HULME, B.A., Librarian of the Patent Office Library. **Price three-pence.**

No. 6. The Library Committee: Its Character and Work. By W. C. BERWICK SAVERS, F.L.A., Chief Librarian of the Croydon Public Libraries. **Price three-pence.**

No. 7. First Steps in Library Routine. By WILLIAM BENSON THORNE, Honorary Secretary of the L.A.A. **Price three-pence.**

To be obtained from the Honorary Secretary, Bromley Library, Brunswick Road, Poplar, E. Postage on Nos. 1-7 one penny each extra.

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ARE YOU HELPING?

The Library Assistants' Association

has done much good work for its Members and for LIBRARIANSHIP GENERALLY in the past. It has stimulated individual effort towards increased efficiency; it has always urged the further development of the Public Library Movement; it has stood for better conditions and has claimed a STANDING FOR THE PROFESSION. At the moment the Association is extending its influences and work, and needs the support and co-operation of all who are qualified for Membership; difficult problems lie ahead which can only be faced effectually by a strong Association.

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for your Association? And will you try now? Remember that the L.A.A. was established TWENTY YEARS AGO, and holds a recognized position. It is no new venture with its way to make.

Any information you may need will be gladly supplied by the *Hon. Secretary*, BROMLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY, BRUNSWICK ROAD, POPLAR, LONDON, E.

procedure is permitted by Section 4 (4) of the London Government Act, 1899, under which certain other stringent formalities have to be observed, yet there is considerable doubt as to this point, and *in none of the Acts is any provision made for the abolition of a library service. It cannot, therefore, have been contemplated that the Library Acts could be abandoned by the Library Authority . . . by a mere resolution to that effect.* Under the Act of 1892 the general management, regulation and control of every library provided under it are vested in and exercisable by the Library Authority, but its power of making regulations is confined to dealing with the safety and use of such libraries, and the admission of the public thereto.

We would further remind the Council that no land bought for Library purposes can be sold without the consent of the Local Government Board, who must, if that consent be given, direct the proceeds to be applied for library purposes. Another difficulty would be that a library rate would have in the future to be levied for some considerable time to pay off loans, compensation to officers, and other purposes, and it is, to say the least, doubtful whether or no such a rate could be resisted in the absence of any library facilities. *It is not, therefore, in our judgment, within the power of the Council to act as proposed by the Library Committee.*" In all cases the italics are ours.

Another important question about which we have heard a good deal lately is that of the reading and circulating of fiction. As our readers are doubtless aware, the Wandsworth Borough Council ceased to issue fiction for the period of the War, and in a town just outside the London area, a motion was recently moved "That the Libraries Committee consider closing the fiction portion of the Public Libraries and report to the Council at the next meeting." The motion was, however, rejected by a large majority. Now, apart from any legal question whatever, we venture to think that such a course is neither wise nor economical. It is not wise, because, by depriving people of fiction we are robbing them of many of the finest productions in the English language, and compelling them to go to inferior works for recreation; it is not economical from a national point of view, because a novel purchased by a public library for half a crown or three shillings will circulate among perhaps two hundred readers, whereas one purchased by a private reader may serve a dozen at most.

We are afraid, however, that at the root of the whole trouble lies a misunderstanding of the word "fiction," and we thoroughly agree with the writer in a recent number of "The Library World" who suggests that we should "create a new term—Imaginative Literature—and then . . . divide this into classic and modern. . . . Let every book written more than 25 years ago which still lives, be called classic; those written since, modern." We are not certain why so many educated people condemn the circulating of fiction in these days, but we think that perhaps their attitude is influenced by one of two causes: either they think that public libraries buy every "novel" that falls from the press, or they are unfamiliar with the fact that a very great proportion of fiction is composed of classic works such as "Pride and Prejudice," "David Copperfield," "Pickwick Papers," "Adam Bede," and "Vanity Fair." These and similar works form a large proportion of the fiction issued at every library, but will anyone say that they should not be read in war time? Quite recently a chance test was made at a certain Library concerning the five works mentioned, and it was found upon examination of the shelves that out of forty-five copies possessed by the Library, only two were on the shelves; all the others were in the hands of readers. By all means let every Library exercise the greatest care in the selection of its fiction, but do not deprive them of such works as we have mentioned.

THE
Library Assistants' Association
TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL REPORT,
1915-16.

The Officers and Council submit their report on the work of the Twenty-first Session.

Membership.—Although the total number of enrolled members is 628, as compared with 624 last year, the War has had an unsettling effect on many of our colleagues, and a number of resignations have been received owing to this cause. The establishment of the West of Scotland Branch has prevented what would, otherwise, have been a reduction in our numbers, but we would again earnestly appeal to members not to sever their connection with the Association without careful consideration of their reasons for so doing. The Council believe it to be of the utmost importance that the Association should continue at its maximum efficiency during the War in order to be ready to go forward with the great educational revival which is sure to follow the declaration of peace.

The membership is made up as follows:—

	Hon. Fellows.	Fel- lows.	Mem- bers.	Associ- ates.	Total.
General Association	15	13	116	69	213
Branches	...	14	176	225	415
	—	—	292	294	628
	15	27			

The approximate number of members on Active Service is 151, exclusive of those called up with the last Derby Groups. The total male membership is 389.

Officers and Council.—In accordance with the rule established in 1914, Mr. Evan G. Rees relinquishes the Presidential Chair after 12 months' service, and the Association is indebted to him for the devoted and sympathetic manner in which he has carried out the duties of the office, while as Chairman of the Council his advice and judgment have at all times been most helpful. The position of Vice-President was ably held by Mr. Geo. W. Strother, who has always been so energetic in promoting the Association's interests, particularly in the Yorkshire Branch area. To Mr. John Warner thanks are due for his services as Honorary Assistant Secretary, which were continued

until he joined the Royal Marine Artillery. In October, 1915, the Council, with much regret accepted the resignation of Mr. C. H. R. Peach, who had left the Profession, and in February, 1916, its strength was still further depleted by the resignation of Miss M. Gilbert on her appointment to the Borough Librarianship of Newark-upon-Trent. Miss Gilbert's services having been so highly esteemed it was resolved unanimously to place the following resolution on the Minutes:—

“ This Meeting of the Council places on record its high appreciation of the long-continued services of Miss Mizpah Gilbert to the Association in many directions, but particularly in connection with the work of the Easter Schools and the Women's Committee; and now congratulates her very heartily on her appointment to the Borough Librarianship of Newark-upon-Trent, with every good wish for unfailing happiness and prosperity in her new sphere.”

Miss E. M. Darling (Chelsea) and Miss M. E. Day (Islington) were elected to fill the vacancies caused by these resignations.

Finance.—During the year donations have been received from Messrs. H. V. Hopwood (Patent Office), J. Y. W. MacAlister (Royal Society of Medicine), H. Rutherford Purnell (South Australia), and H. Smith (Bishopsgate Institute), to whom the Council offers its grateful thanks. Special mention should be made, however, of Mr. MacAlister's donation. With a magnanimity which is so characteristic of him, Mr. MacAlister sent a cheque for £5 to the Hon. Secretary upon hearing that the finances of the Association were suffering from the effects of the War, and in this practical manner proved his keen and lasting interest in the affairs of the L.A.A.

Although the revenue from members' subscriptions shows a decrease of some 35 per cent., this fall has been counterbalanced by an advanced income from advertisements, so that the total sum at the disposal of the Council has not been below that of the previous year. Should the War last into 1917, the receipts from the former source will show a further decrease, but it is anticipated that by careful budgeting, it will be possible to keep the Association solvent until happier days arrive.

That the Association's finances are in so satisfactory a state in spite of the changed circumstances is due entirely to Mr. Chamber's skilful budgeting, and the Council wishes to acknowledge its continued indebtedness to him for this invaluable service.

Education Committee.—The Council of the Library Association having agreed to a Joint-Programme of Meetings for the

Winter Session, Miss Gilbert, together with Messrs. Warner and Young, the President and the Honorary Secretary, were selected to serve on the special Joint-Committee appointed to arrange a programme. This Committee planned a series of papers which were left for Mr. W. B. Thorne, who acted as its Secretary, to arrange in conjunction with the Chairman, Mr. Henry R. Tedder. The Inaugural Meeting was held at the house of Messrs. Selfridge and Co., Ltd., Oxford Street, when Mr. Frank Chitham, one of the directors, gave the address. The remaining meetings were held alternately at Caxton Hall and the following places:—St. Bride Institute, Church House (Westminster), the Polyglot Club (Southampton Row), and the Gray's Inn Library. To those who contributed papers and to those who provided meeting-places the Council desires to express its very cordial thanks.

Publications Committee.—Despite several grave difficulties *The Library Assistant* has appeared regularly month by month. After struggling patiently, though unsuccessfully, with continued ill-health, Mr. Harry G. Sureties was compelled to resign the Honorary Editorship, which he had held with so much credit since 1913. With deep regret the Council accepted Mr. Sureties' decision, offering him its warmest thanks for all his unselfish devotion to the work, and wishing him a speedy return to health. Unfortunately this wish has not been fulfilled and Mr. Sureties' health is still precarious. The office thus rendered vacant was undertaken by Mr. J. E. Walker, who had been rendering Mr. Sureties valuable assistance as Assistant Editor, and Miss R. L. Duménil was elected Assistant in his place. Shortly after taking office, however, an opportunity—hitherto frequently denied—was offered to Mr. Walker for entering the Army, and the position was again vacant. No other candidates being available for the moment, Mr. Hugh Smith very kindly offered to conduct the Journal until a new Editor was appointed, and the Council is under very considerable obligation to him for relieving it of an extremely awkward predicament. At the October Council Meeting Messrs. Warner and Sharp were elected Joint-Editors, and upon Mr. Warner's enlistment Mr. Sharp assumed full responsibility, continuing the work in a manner entirely satisfactory to the Council under circumstances which frequently make the work not a little difficult. Miss Duménil, as Assistant Editor, addresses the envelopes and superintends the despatch of the Journal every month: a task representing much labour and deserving the utmost credit, inasmuch as it is generally overlooked by the bulk of the membership, though actually it is work of the highest importance, demanding constant attention and unceasing self-sacrifice. In con-

sequence of the increased cost of materials the Journal has again been reduced in size: it is hoped that the minimum has been reached, but, of course, further reduction is inevitable if prices rise still higher or income continues to diminish. An additional number of "The L.A.A. Series"—"First Steps in Library Routine," by the Honorary Secretary—has been issued and has found a ready sale, while the demand for other numbers continues.

Library Committee.—This Committee has not met during the year, but under the fostering care of Miss C. Mitchell the collection of books maintains its usefulness and with the return of peaceful times will be a more valuable adjunct than ever. The Honorary Librarian, for whose services the Council is extremely grateful, reports as follows:—"There has been a natural decrease in the use made of the Library, though parcels of books have been sent to members in camp while training, revealing a commendable spirit of determination to continue their studies even under adverse circumstances. Additions during the year have been few, but the Council is indebted to Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers for various numbers of British and American professional periodicals."

Branches.—The War has laid a crippling hand on the work and development of Branch organizations. In several cases all the officers have joined the Colours, while the number of active members has been so depleted as to render the carrying on of the work impracticable. The outstanding feature of the year was the establishment of the West of Scotland Branch to which reference was made in the last Annual Report. The first Honorary Secretary, Mr. R. D. Macleod, after achieving a splendid success, resigned upon being called to important organizing work under the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust. To him, with Mr. David C. Campbell, belongs much credit for the careful and enthusiastic arrangement of preliminaries, which resulted in establishing the Branch on a firm foundation, and the Council takes pleasure in acknowledging this. On Mr. Macleod's resignation Mr. Joseph Norrie succeeded to the Honorary Secretaryship, and in his hands the work has prospered. The Branch Committee was fortunate in securing Glasgow's premier Librarian, Mr. S. A. Pitt, as the first President, the wise and encouraging words of whose inaugural address will be long remembered. This Branch has distinguished itself in organizing courses of lectures in Librarianship, and its first programme of meetings was one of great merit. The North Western Branch has carried on very successfully, thanks to the energy of its Secretary, Mr. James Ross, while the Yorkshire Branch, guided by Mr. J. C. Handby, who is performing the secretarial duties

during the absence of Mr. Parsons, maintained a measure of its usual activity under difficult circumstances. For the South Coast Branch Miss Ethel Gerard has done her best to keep the remaining members together, and thanks are due to her for having undertaken practically all the work of the Branch until the normal course of affairs is resumed. It is highly desirable that the organization of the Branches shall be kept intact, so that when the men now serving their country in different parts of the world return to civil life, there shall be the minimum of difficulty in taking up the threads of the work again, and reviving healthily the activities which have, perforce, been in abeyance during the War.

Promotion.—The Council congratulates the following members upon their promotion during the year:—Miss M. Gilbert (Borough Librarian, Newark-upon-Trent), Messrs. Frank Dallimore (Borough Librarian, Darlington), S. E. Harrison (Director, Library, Museum and Art Gallery, Cheltenham), R. D. Macleod (Organiser of Rural Libraries in Scotland for the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust), W. Robertshaw (Librarian, Yorkshire Philosophical Society, York), W. C. Berwick Sayers (Chief Librarian, Croydon), W. Wilson (Chief Librarian, Wallasey). Many other members have received promotion, and to these the Council offers congratulations, wishing them a continuance of their success.

Obituary.—During the year two valued members have passed away. In the autumn of 1915 news came of the death of T. E. Turnbull, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. An enthusiast for Librarianship and all that it means; the founder, practically, of the North Eastern Branch; the efficient conductor of a Correspondence Class for the Library Association, his demise at the early age of 34 was a severe loss, for men of his type are too few to be easily spared. Then in April, 1916, the Association lost one of its Honorary Fellows in the person of Henry T. Coutts, whose age was only 35 years. Mr. Coutts had occupied the offices of Honorary Secretary and President with distinction and laboured faithfully for many years in the Association's interest. He was also an industrious contributor to professional literature, and was identified with operations in various other fields of bibliographical and library research work. A man of charming presence, he was liked and respected by all with whom he came into contact, and he played a valuable part in the Association's history. Although never a member of the L.A.A., when C. F. Newcombe of the Camberwell Libraries died, the Profession lost an extremely cultured member of its ranks, and the Library Assistants' Association lost a friend who was ever ready to respond to its appeals for whatever purpose

he was approached. Never before have three so much to be regretted deaths been recorded in the Association's Annual Reports.

General Policy.—The work of the Association during the period under review has necessarily lost a considerable proportion of that energy and interest which have characterised reports of recent years. With the whole nation unsettled to its very foundations and the minds of the people anxious and disturbed from a variety of causes it was not a propitious time for contemplating new enterprises or launching new schemes, even had the members remaining sufficient opportunity and leisure for the purpose; which, of course, was not the case. While the present serious and disturbed state of national affairs prevails it does not appear that anything more than continuing the current routine as efficiently as possible can be attempted. It is important that none of the organization, built upon 21 years of constant endeavour, should be allowed to lapse, and it will be the Council's continual object to prevent this: in this connection the magnificent practical encouragement of Mr. MacAlister must be mentioned again as witness to the value of the Association's existence to Librarianship generally. In spite of rather serious curtailment of service in the libraries of one or two London Boroughs for reasons of alleged economy, it has been generally recognized that public libraries are an essential feature of the life of the community and their operations have not been restricted to any considerable degree. The reduction of staffs has been met by shortening the hours of opening, or by engaging, temporarily, women and girls for routine work. Extension work and the extra efforts so familiar in the average public library have naturally been much impeded, but the desire to "carry on" has surmounted many obstacles and there has been an all-round eagerness to maintain the libraries at as high a level of efficiency as is humanly possible. In view of the demands which will almost inevitably be made at the conclusion of the War some libraries are indeed making special effort to improve their stock of technical books and to be prepared to render all conceivable assistance in the industrial revival towards which economists are looking. The Council believes it to be its duty to press home these ideas and to exhort members of the Association to seize what is really a golden opportunity for convincing the public at large that libraries are indispensable institutions capable of rendering the highest service to the community.

Approved by the Council and ordered to be printed, 17th May, 1916.

EVAN G. REES, *President.*

WM. BENSON THORNE, *Honorary Secretary.*

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE, 1915-16.

RECEIPTS.			EXPENDITURE.		
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Balance	21 7 5	Printing (including "The Library Assistant")	... ...	88 3 9
Members' Subscriptions	23 5 0	Postages (including "The Library Assistant")	... ...	30 8 9
Branch Subscriptions	33 17 9	Stationery	... ...	4 18 6
Advertisements in and Sale of "The Library Assistant"	61 11 10	Grant to Scotch Branch	... ...	1 10 0
Donations	6 5 0	Subscription to Library Association	... ...	...
Sale of L.A.A. Series	1 3 0	Miscellaneous	... ...	1 1 0
Miscellaneous	0 3 0		... ...	0 14 6
Total Receipts	126 5 7	Total Expenditure	... ...	126 16 11
			Balance	... ...	20 16 6
					£147 13 0

Audited by us and found correct,

W. GEO. CHAMBERS,
May 18th, 1916.

Hon. Treasurer.

Auditors.
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May 1916.